THE EYE:

BY OBADIAH OPTIC.

——*VARIOUS OBJECTS FROM THE SENSE,*
VARIOUSLY REPRESENTING. MILTON.

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In England, the poor rates amount to £2,000,000 sterling, or 8,880,000 dollars; it has been calculated that one person in seven of the inhabitants of the country derives, at some period of his life, assistance from this fund. GODWIN.

IN casting our eyes over the map of the world, and affixing to each portion of it its quantum of misery, as far as it hath come to our knowledge, and drawing a comparison also of the comparative happiness, we can in strict justice say, and we trust with grateful hearts, that the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places.

Do you desire, says an ingenious writer, to receive a sure rule by which you may determine what government is the best on earth, I will give it you; travel and observe for yourself, mark out that country where the poor are best taken care of, that is the best government, for it comes nearest the order of Providence.

In England, where philanthropy is much boasted of, their poor rates at this instant amount to ten millions of dollars, yet how their poor are provided for, let one of their own poets tell us—

Their's is yon house that holds the parish poor,
Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door;
There, where the putrid vapours flagging play,
And the dull wheel hums doleful through the day:
There children dwell, who know no parent's care,
Parents, who know no children's love, dwell there;
Heart-broken matrons on their joyless bed,
Forsaken wives, and mothers never wed;

Dejected widows with unheeded tears,
And crippled age with more than childhood fears!
The lame, the blind—and far the happiest they!
The moping ideot and the madman gay.
Here too the sick their final doom receive,
Here brought, amid the scenes of grief, to grieve:
Where the loud groans from some sad chamber flow,
Mix'd with the clamours of the crowd below;
Here, sorrowing, they each kindred sorrow scan,
And the cold charities of man to man:
Whose laws indeed for ruin'd age provide,
And strong compulsion plucks the scrap from pride;
But still that scrap is bought with many a sigh,
And pride embitters what it can't deny.

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Such is that room which one rude beam divides,
And naked rafters form the sloping sides;
Where the vile bands that bind the thatch are seen,
And lath and mud are all that lie between,
Save one dull pane, that, coarsely patch'd, gives way
To the rude tempest, yet excludes the day:
Here, on a matted flock, with dust o'erspread,
The drooping wretch reclines his languid head;
For him no hand the cordial cup applies,
Nor wipes the tear that stagnates in his eyes;
No friends with soft discourse his pains beguile,
Nor promise hope till sickness wears a smile. CRABBE.

Here our poor tax amounts to about 100,000 dollars a year, and we may estimate the inhabitants of the city and county of Philadelphia to be 100,000. In our poor house we never have had at one time 1000, but, for sake of calculation, we will admit that number, say that poor housekeepers who get weekly pensions also equal 1000, we have still but 2000 poor to place against 100,000, which bears proportion as one is to fifty, consequently the English poor are seven times more numerous than ours—and therefore, by this ratio, our government would exceed their's as seven is to one.

But this is not all, in England supporting their poor is considered as an act of charity; we consider it as a *just debt*, and it stands upon a similar footing with the society for supporting the widows of clergymen, provident societies, captains, and carpenters societies, &c.; for each householder pays the as-

sessed tax, and thereby is justly entitled, should need so require it, to receive support from that fund ;—true, thousands pay, who never reap any personal benefit, but should the hard hand of adversity press them down, they could demand support as a matter of right, not grace.

To a person whose heart beats with pleasure when he views the happiness of his kind, reflections of this nature are very pleasing, and for that reason, we have thought proper to begin the second volume of the '*Eye*,' with this subject ; I have often viewed our poor house, gone through all its departments, and closely studied its order and regularity ; too much praise can scarcely be given to the citizens who at present superintend it ; through the whole, cleanlines reigns ; the sick are well attended by the most skilful physicians ; four students of medicine reside in the house ; the clothes of the poor are all manufactured by themselves, and a vast quantity of linen, stripes, cotton goods of different kinds, blankets, coatings, diaper, coverlids, &c. &c. is sold for the benefit of the institution ; but that my readers may be fully acquainted with this institution, I shall, in a future number, give the quantities of different kinds manufactured in one year, that so every person may be convinced of the utility of the present mode of action : I say nothing of the behaviour of the steward and matron, citizens would do well to inform themselves on these subjects—let the curious go out and examine the house, they will see order and regularity in every room, and propriety of conduct, decency and decorum in as high a state as is perhaps possible among such a motley multitude.

It is true, the spectator will meet with people who will complain, they would wish for finer tea, fairer sugar, better coffee, more costly clothes, &c. and not a few who would earnestly wish for a little brandy, spirits, or gin. But it never was the intention of the managers to fulfil their wishes, but supply their wants ; these discontented people say they are not happy—pray when were they so ? Examine them and it will be found that at least three fourths have came to that house either the victims of vice, or slaves of intemperance, and are they to be satisfied as to their wishes? No ! let the examiner view all, he will find the victuals substantial and wholesome, the clothes neat and serviceable, their beds healthful, their rooms clean and airy : It is not denied but those who are able must work, but is not that also conducive to health ? the tasks are easy, the burdens are light. I shall conclude this number

with one remark—I never have in Europe or America seen any institution, nor do I believe one existing in the world, where equality appears in a more perfect state; in our poor house, he who was rich and he who is poor meet together, the LORD is the maker of them all. OBADIAH OPTIC.

(to be continued)

ORIGINAL.

THE EXPATIATOR.—No. I.

——— Of making many books there is no end. ECCLES.

THERE is not perhaps in the whole system of nature, a more undefinable being than an author—every thing has its particular order in the universe, him excepted, and I think it would puzzle the most sagacious theorist to designate his proper sphere of action; his engagements are such that they are a mystery to himself, nor is it possible to determine the extent of his labours; he produces a composition, and when once given to the world, it is not in his power to stay its progress, it becomes universal property, and may exist when his dust is scattered by the four winds which blow upon the earth. This consideration should forcibly impress the mind of every one who uses the pen, for amusement, for the purpose of communicating information or inculcating precepts.

When MOSES wrote, it was by a spirit of inspiration; he was the instrument of DEITY, chosen for the grand purpose of transmitting to the then present and all future ages, a correct knowledge of important facts relative to subjects interesting to the whole human race. The other prophets and the apostles were also directed by the same heavenly influence; and we have good reasons to believe, that many, very many since their day have been actuated by the same efficacious power in communicating to their fellow beings the knowledge which they possessed respecting divine things, and that much light has been diffused by means of their judicious writings.

But, independent of inspiration, what has induced men, in all ages, to commit their ideas and opinions to the world? The answers to this question would be almost as various as the subjects which have been descanted upon.—Some have been influenced by pure motives, desirous of adding to the stock of

general information on useful subjects, and of promoting the convenience and happiness of mankind; having themselves experienced the benefits connected with the practice of what they recommended, and enjoyed the comforts arising from an adherence to the precepts they inculcated, a desire to render them more extensively useful produced their dissemination; motives like these are highly commendable, yet prudence, in all such cases, ought to be a governing principle, for a sentiment once promulgated, can never be recalled—it may be contested, and even denounced by its author, but can never be obliterated. Many have written for fame, without a more laudable incentive to action than a desire to hear the voice of the multitude loud in their applause; such deserve but little credit. Others, and these are not the least numerous, have exercised their talents for their own amusement—it is truly a praise-worthy exercise, and often productive of beneficial consequences; productions arising from this source are generally most natural, and undisguisedly discover the objects of their authors; still, caution should accompany us in judging of such writings, for many literary dæmons in [illegible]ld robes, have introduced themselves to the affections in this manner, who, like their stygian master, have been diligent in their endeavours to destroy the comforts which sweeten life: From their writings arise the most noxious vapours and their influence is malignant; such ought ever to be discountenanced; for, if men possessing talents, apply them to purposes which eventually detract from human happiness, they should be considered as betrayers of their trust, and treated with marked disapprobation; many writers of this species have appeared in the world, some of whom have given specimens of elegant composition, whilst the substance of their works exhibits the corruption of their principles and the depravity of their hearts, and are standing memorials of degraded abilities; I had rather become incapable of committing my thoughts to paper, than give publicity to a single sentiment calculated to injure my fellow beings, or at the review of which I should have cause to blush: With this impression, every one who enters the field of literature as a writer, either as an employment, for amusement, or exercise and self-improvement, cannot otherwise than be, in some degree, useful: In the first volume of the '*Eye*' I have observed several writers whose aim appears to have been the good of mankind, which must be highly gratifying to the friends of im-

provement; that the ensuing volume will not be less pure, I have reason confidently to hope; how much I shall contribute to its merit, remains to be determined by my future numbers; I shall however, always endeavour in my observations to adhere to the side of virtue, and meet the contrary principle with the weapons of opposition. O.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EYE.

SIR,

As I understand it is not foreign from your plan to insert selections, I with due deference to your opinion, request you will give publicity thro' the medium of your paper, to the following pathetic morceau, it will be new to most of your readers, and pleasing to many of your female friends, among whom is

MARIA.

STORY OF LAURA:

RECITED BY HERSELF.

IT is a tale of misery, and with but little incident, (said she, addressing herself to Eliza) and though the recital of it can afford you no pleasure, still I hope it will not cause your generous breast one moment's pain. My father was of a good family, in the south of England, and left his native country to avoid a disagreeable marriage, and came to settle in America unless his family should relent and call him back; but this was not the case, for his father sent him one hundred pounds, with orders never to see him more. He sought out a pleasant village, and with part of the money there built a small house: What to do for future support, he was wholly at a loss. However, he was determined to live as long as the remainder of the cash would support him, and then try for some employment. My mother was the daughter of a farmer in the village where my father resided; and it was her mental qualifications that first caught his attentions; nor was her person less beautiful than her mind, which was purity itself. A tender passion was formed on both sides, and each was determined to live only for the happiness of the other. The farmer being loth to part with his daughter, as she was his only child, and having buried his wife, she supplied the place of housekeeper and comforter in his old age. Love, that powerful advocate, plead so strongly that the old man was unable to say no. The Gordian knot was tied, and both parties thought themselves happy: But happiness, that source from which all our pleasures spring, was not the lot of my mistaken parents. I was their only offspring, and my mother, who

taught me the first rudiments of virtue, would warn me of the inconstancy of man, and in a most delicate manner, point out the many snares laid by them, to entrap our sex. Such were the principles instilled into my tender mind by this

"Best of mothers—dear, departed shade!"

(Nature demanded a tribute—it was paid—and she again proceeded)—

In about thirteen months after my mother's marriage, her father died, and only left enough to defray the funeral expences. A Mr. Clairvill hired the farm, for it did not belong to my grandfather, and with his son Harry carried on the farming business—here was the first beginning of my misfortunes. Mr. Clairvill was a character who ought to be detested by every friend to virtue; for under the specious mask of friendship, he concealed at once, the enemy and the villain. Different was the character of his amiable Harry; in him was every virtue, joined to a graceful person, and manly deportment, which endeared him to all who knew him.

Mr. Clairvill, on his first arrival, cast an envious eye on our small habitation; and summoned all human art to his aid, to get possession. There was a tavern in the neighborhood, and to this place did Mr. Clairvill draw my father, where gaming was their chief employment. This treacherous friend would lend him large sums of money, when he lost, which was always the case: Thus did he answer all his ends, by involving my father in his debt. At last the mask fell off, and discovered the traitor; or, to speak more plain, Mr. Clairvill one fatal evening, told my father, unless he instantly refunded the money lent him, he should next morning seize his effects. To expostulate would have been in vain—he was determined, and made good his word; for the next day he attached the house, and threw my father into a loathsome prison. Lost to every principle of honour and humanity, he turned my mother and myself into the street, and Heaven only knows what would have been our fate, had not a poor cottager given us shelter in his hut. Picture to yourself, madam, the state of a once happy family—the father confined to a wretched prison, surrounded by objects more miserable than himself. But who can paint the horrors of a prison, except its wretched inhabitants? The wife and child dependent on a poor cottager for daily bread—nor at all this did my mother repine or murmur against Heaven: Friends were tried, who proved Clairvills—

"Ah! what is friendship but a name;
A charm that lulls to sleep—
A shade, that follows wealth and fame,
And leaves the wretch to weep."

I endeavoured to procure some work, but failed in the attempt; for the inhabitants in general were very poor, and glad to do their own:—This was a double disappointment—for, could I have got work, then should I have enjoyed the pleasing satisfaction of administering a little comfort to a father, whose situation was such that he wanted not comfort long. Early one morning we were sent for to the prison—we immediately obeyed the summons, and arrived at those gloomy walls: But oh! how shall I describe the scene that presented itself on our entrance? My father in the agonies of death—never shall I forget his sighs, tears and groans—the power of speech was denied him, and in about half an hour he expired in the arms of my mother, who had him conveyed from that dreary mansion to the cottage, from whence he was buried, at the expence of the town. Here was misery; and to add to it, the farmer told us, that he could support us no longer. What then must be done but quit a place where nought but Poverty, with her dire train, awaited us? However, he told us that we might stay that night and depart in the morning. We retired to rest, but not to sleep; it was the mind which wanted repose, and not the body.

"Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep;
He, like the world, his ready visits pays
Where fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes;
Swift, on his downy pinions, flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsully'd with a tear."

We arose with heavy hearts, and taking a sad and last adieu of every thing around us, pursued our lonely way—

"The world was all before us, where to choose
Our place to rest—and Providence our guide."

We had walked about four miles, without taking any refreshment, save a little water from the brooks: At length we found ourselves in a large wood, where the tall oaks spread their luxuriant branches, and kindly invited us beneath their shade. We sat down to think what was best to be done. My mother at last broke silence—my child, said she, I feel myself approaching towards the verge of eternity—I have endured long; and yet a little longer and all will be over—but alas!

to what a situation do I leave you—without friends or home —killing thoughts!—I intreated her to be comforted; perhaps, said I, we shall yet find those who are charitable enough to give us some relief. She seemed to smile, and gave me her hand, which I received, pressed to my bosom, arose in solemn silence, and walked on. At last we saw a miserable hovel, which we approached; I knocked at the door, but no one came. I lifted up the latch, and went in; but judge my surprise, when I found it was uninhabited, neither was there any thing that could lead to a discovery of its owner. A few old rags, which appeared to have served for a bed, were scattered on the floor. On these my mother threw herself down never more to rise. I watched with her all night. Good God, cried I, what misery hast thou in store for me in a desolate place, without the means of satisfying the wants of nature! Thus did I spend the night and the next day. At length benignant Heaven took compassion on our misfortunes, and chose you as our guardian angel; yes, it was you, and you only, who made the last hour of my mother happy: A mother, whose memory is still dear to my heart. You suffered me to stay no longer than a night and a day in a deserted hovel; when, by your generous bounty, I was placed in affluence.

SELECTED.

THE VISION OF ABDELLAH.

THE sun had darted his parting glance from out the bosom of his cheerful bride, the lovely Thetis, when Abdellah wandered from the suburbs of Balsora; and, while deeply meditating on the end for which man was created, innumerous thoughts, the phantoms of the moment, stole in upon his mind. The dæmon of darkness, slow pacing over the dusky brow of Twilight, perceived his doubts, and fearing lest Reason should out-strip the vague ideas which philosophers had inculcated, bade Lethargy, the soft companion of her way, pluck from her downy wing the heaviest plume, and write oblivion on his anxious doubts. Soon as she had armed it with the dew stolen from the closing poppy, she flew to obey; but the genius Truth, who had overheard the fell command, rushed from her sphere, and with her wand warded off the impending evil. Nor yet entirely was the evil procrastinated; for as she fled, one big drop fell from the plume, and lulled

his senses for awhile in sleep. Truth perceived the mishap, and bade Hope, attendant on her call, in genial tints portray the pregnant dream—

He beheld a damsel, lovely as the morning, whose brow a chaplet bound, adorned with one bright gem in front; though small its orb, yet from it beamed myriads of light which wide dispensed an artificial day; her robe, pure as the snow, the winter cloak of the lofty Alpines, and softly diffused around her arm, fair as the encircled mantle. She waved her wand of adamantine, and, lo, the air was darkened, loud rolled the crashing thunder, and intercepting flashes pierced the gloom; she ceased and all was still, still as the grave! Abdellah impatiently urged her with enquiries, when she replied, her name was "Truth," and turned. He now beheld a steep and rugged mount, whose summit seemed to mingle with the clouds; a few winding and treacherous paths were perceptible on its sides, and in one part glistened a pale and tremulous flame; a choir of blissful youths pursued it; it vanished; they precipitately dashed into pieces; groans and cries of anguish succeeded. Abdellah, no longer able to view the mountain, anxiously besought Truth to inform him the significancy of these appearances. She rejoined, "Thou hast seen, O, Abdellah, the Mountain of Life; the paths which were just distinguishable, and frequently destructive to the passenger—the pursuits of men; the flame which afforded for awhile a lambent gleam—Pleasure; the train of youths, her votaries, and at length the victims to her deceptions: Such, O, Abdellah, are the consequences of life. Again do thou look forth. The mountain again appeared, and he saw one toiling alone to attain the summit; but, while clinging to a projecting part, he fell, and was no more seen. A numerous company united hand in hand, then came forward, and soon ascended the greatest elevation of the mountain. But Truth waved her wand, and all was invisible. "Thou hast again beheld, O, Abdellah, the Mountain of Life; the first who singly endeavoured to climb it was the misanthrope, the man of solitude, who was lost in the attempt; the company was society, who, by their mutual aid, diminished their labour, and at length insured their success. Cultivate society, and be happy.

In your friendships, and in your enmities, let your confidence and your hostilities have certain bounds: Make not the former dangerous, nor the latter incredible.

Poetical Department.

ORIGINAL.

TO A ROSE.

SWEET flower that glows on the bosom of spring,
Whose fragrance floats lightly on zephry's soft wing,
And the senses enraptured regales:
Of beauty the emblem; of health the bright hue,
As pure, as unspotted, and chaste as the dew
On the breezes of morning that sails.

From thy bed let me pluck thee, and bear thy bright form,
To the bosom of ANNA, where safe from the storm,
Thy leaves may their fragrance diffuse;
Go, she will caress the sweet flower that bears
A resemblance to youth and to beauty like hers
And never thy sweetness abuse.

But remember the favour and gratefully say,
"My beauty and fragrance must soon pass away,
They are doom'd but an hour to live—
Yet would thy kind fate with my wishes comply,
Content in thy bosom I ever would lie,
And longer, much longer survive." ANACHARSIS.

ORIGINAL.

THE BET.

Addressed to a Lady.

STELLA thou art a pretty maid,
In shape and features just the dandy;
And if the truth be sung or said,
As sweet as is this lemon candy.*

Yet not insipid as the sweet,
Which pleases first but soon grows cloying;
A little lemon squeez'd into it,
The flat, insipid taste destroying.

* The paper on which the lines were written, enclosed the amount of the bet in this article.

These rightly mix'd—in due degree—
Not over much of one or th' other,
Will, always STELLA, please in thee,
And peradventure in another.

But ah, too much my girl beware
The sharp and acid fruit of pressing,
Lest you the shrinking taste deter
From liking what is not a blessing.

Thus do I pay the debt I owe,
By wretched lines on candy, writing,
Than reading which, you would, I know
Much rather be the candy biting.

Let not these trifling lines offend,
E'en should they not prove just the dandy,
Rather than willingly offend,
I'd eat a pound of lemon candy. ANACHARSIS.

ORIGINAL.

PLEASURE AND PAIN.

A COOL shady grove when the sun was declining,
Gay *Pleasure* sought out to indulge in repose;
But ere on the bank she could think of reclining,
Essay'd in the goblet to drown all her woes.

Her goblet was fill'd with impoisoned nectar—
She quaff'd—but alas! it confused her brain;
And now with the night-shades approach'd a sad spectre,
Whose ghastly appearance denoted him *Pain*.

He waved his black wand when from *Pleasure's* bright temples,
The wreath that encircled them instantly fell;
Her smiles now evanish and tears fill her dimples,
Whilst pangs of keen anguish her comforts dispel.

Her vot'ries who erst in her revels delighted,
And sought in her favour evasion of care,
Are forced from her presence dismay'd and affrighted,
The victims of *Sorrow*, *Remorse*, and *Despair*. ALICIAN.